

Happy Ever After



So Ringo and his Maureen were married, but this was no ordinary wedding . . . Sylvia Stephen tells you when they met . . . and fell in love.

THE dark coloured Austin Princess drew up outside the grey building standing back from Victoria Street, London. Two people got out, a boy and a girl. They both looked a little nervous. As the car slid away, he took her hand and smiled at her, hoping the smile hid the fact that butterflies were scuttering around inside him.

"It's all right, love," he whispered. "There's nothing to be nervous about—is there?"

"Of course not," she whispered back, squeezing Ringo's hand. They were in love and they were going to get married.

He first met Maureen at the Cavern Club, Liverpool, in 1962. He'd been with The Beatles for one hectic week.

In one of the breaks, when The Beatles had a breather and someone else took their place on

stage, he found Maureen. It wasn't love at first sight. But they liked one another. When Ringo asked for a date, she said simply: "Yes."

They still hardly knew one another when The Beatles were suddenly in terrific demand, hitting Number One in the charts. The Beatles were boarding 'planes and trains to sing to a world that had gone Beatle crazy. The Beatles were the dream of every girl in England.

Maureen began to wonder what effect this would have on her friendship with Ringo. Surely now he'd have no time for her?

She went on with her life, trying not to think of him too much, as she travelled from her parents' home in Boundary Street, near the docks, to the hairdressing salon where she was an apprentice. Sadly, she realised she'd probably never see him again. He was a star now. He was

one quarter of the biggest act ever to hit the stunning heights of show business.

The world choked with surprise when Paul and Ringo went on holiday. Not because the two boys teamed up for a cruise round the Caribbean Sea. Not even because Jane Asher went along. But because included in the party was a young hairdresser from Liverpool called Maureen Cox.

Maureen herself had hardly been able to believe it when, at the very first opportunity, he'd contacted her again and asked for a date. And when he invited her to go on the fabulous holiday, she thought she must be hearing things.

"Please come," he said simply.

She went. The world buzzed. They were secretly married, the rumours said, and this was their honeymoon trip.

But they weren't married—yet.

So in love. Mr. and Mrs. Ringo Starr after their quiet wedding



She stayed in the background, happy because she knew that whenever he was away, he'd 'phone at least three times a week.

Then, at two o'clock one morning at London's Ad Lib Club, he proposed. He didn't make a big scene of it. He just told her he loved her and asked her to marry him. Equally simply, she said, "Yes." Before he started making wedding plans, though, there was just one more step Ringo took. He asked Maureen's father for permission to marry his daughter. It was far more nerve stretching than walking on to a film set for the first time. But it was the proper, polite thing to do and Ringo did it. Delighted, Mr. Cox said "Yes" at once. And Ringo Starr and Maureen Cox were officially engaged.

Quarter past eight on a February morning was a pretty unusual time to get married, Ringo knew. But this was Maureen's day, and he wanted her to be the centre of attention. If he'd married more openly, if there'd been an official announcement, a big, public wedding, he'd have got all the attention, and George and John. He didn't want that.

The Registrar smiled at the wedding party. "Are we ready to begin?"

They were. Ten minutes later, a gold, criss-cross patterned ring firmly in place on her left hand, Maureen was Mrs. Ringo Starr. Her husband put his arm round her.

"Happy?" he asked. She nodded. And he kissed her.



Cynthia Lennon looks on smiling as Ringo puts the ring on Maureen's finger (Below left): This one'll go in the family album. Ringo, his wife and their wedding party. (Bottom right): Ringo with manager and Best Man Brian Epstein wait for the ceremony to begin





Left: Ringo and Maureen don't have to keep it a secret any longer—the whole World knows. Below: Not just any wedding group but THE wedding group of the year.

Above: Mr. & Mrs. Richard Starkey, alias Ringo, and Maureen. Right: "With this ring I thee wed." Brian Epstein (left) and Cynthia and John Lennon in the background.

